

**STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY OF MARGARET TATE IN
ANNE FLETCHER'S *THE PROPOSAL* MOVIE (2009):
AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**

Naskah Publikasi

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ABSTRACT

SETYO DARNAWI. A 320 070 028: STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY OF MARGARET TATE IN ANNE FLETCHER'S *THE PROPOSAL* MOVIE (2009): AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH RESEARCH PAPER. Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. 2012.

The researcher analyzes striving for superiority feeling in *The Proposal* movie. The researcher analyzes the main character who is Margaret Tate in strive her superiority in chief of a book publishing company. Even when he should sacrifice herself for get married. She calls Andrew into the office and announces to her bosses that she and Andrew are getting married.

The problem statement of this research paper is that how the struggle for superiority is reflected in chief of a book publishing company in *The Proposal* movie. Therefore, the objective of this research paper is 1) to analyze of the movie based on the structural elements, and 2) to analyze the main character's (Margaret Tate) personality based on the individual psychological perspective.

The movie has fulfilled the structural element of a movie. Meanwhile the individual psychological perspective of Margaret Tate in striving for superiority is that she tries to attempt anything to strive for her superiority in high-powered book editor. She voided her visa and will be deported shortly. This would mean that she would lose her job, which would be given to the only other editor in the building Bob. She blackmails Andrew to keep the ruse until she gains her citizenship.

Key word: *individual psychology, striving for superiority, Margaret Tate*

A. Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Literature is strongly influenced by human life because it appears from an author who lives as human being. Literature represents some of many directions taken to understand the complexity of human behavior and of human nature (Hjelle, 1992: 1). Literary work reflects a description of this human life with its various problems expresses the author's problem and gives more knowledge to understand the value of life. Literature has a tight relationship to psychology since it is the exposition of man's mental life.

In most cases, literature refers to the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the word (Klarer, 1999: 1). Meanwhile, psychology is the scientific study of behavior and the mind (Passer and Smith, 2004: 3). Therefore, human being is one of the research objects of literature and psychology, and this mixture is found in the individual psychology theory.

The Individual Psychology is a science or theory of personality proposed by Alfred Adler, which emphasizes on the uniqueness of each individual and the processes that people overcome their limitations and struggle to reach their life's goals. From the definition above, it can be concluded that Individual Psychology tries to understand how humans

solve their limitation by doing some efforts to become superior, perfect or complete in order to achieve their destinations.

The Proposal movie directed by Anne Fletcher was published in 2009. Anne Fletcher (born May 1, 1966) is an American film director and choreographer. Fletcher took dance lessons as a child. At the age of 15, she appeared on the show *Salute to the Superstars*; later she moved to California, where she was trained by Joe Tremaine. She worked as a choreographer and worked in this capacity for six years with Jeff Andrews. The duo worked among other things on television work and music videos. In her first film roles Fletcher appeared as a dancer, including *The Flintstones* (1994), *The Mask* (1994) and *Tank Girl* (1995). She developed choreography for the Oscar-nominated film drama *Boogie Nights* (1997) with Mark Wahlberg, Burt Reynolds, Julianne Moore and Heather Graham – in which she appeared herself as a dancer – as well as for the comedy *A Life Less Ordinary* with Ewan McGregor and Cameron Diaz.

This movie demonstrates how to defend high status in this dark comedy drama. Margaret Tate (Sandra Bullock) is the executive editor-in-chief of a book publishing company, Colden Books, who forces her assistant Andrew Paxton (Ryan Reynolds) to marry her in order to avoid being deported to Canada. He grudgingly accepts, under the condition that he is promoted to the position of editor.

When the government investigates, the two are forced to spend the weekend with his parents in Alaska in order to sell the lie. The family suggests they could marry the same weekend, and they reluctantly accept. They start to fall genuinely in love as they spend more and more time together.

Because of this, during the wedding ceremony, Margaret decides she cannot do this to Andrew and confesses the business arrangement in front of everyone--including the immigration officer handling their case. She tell that she has 24 hours to get back to Canada, and thus goes back to New York to pack her things. Upon doing so, however, Andrew shows up at the office and confesses his love for her in front of the entire office staff, proposing marriage all over again.

2. Literature Review

The writer does not find the other research in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta and Surakarta region, Semarang region, and also some Yogyakarta regions conducting a study of Margaret Tate in Anne Fletcher's *The Proposal* movie.

The research takes the Individual Psychological Approach to reveal Striving for Superiority of Margaret Tate as the major character in *The Proposal* Movie.

3. Problem Statement

The problem statement of this study is: "How is striving for superiority of Margaret Tate reflected in *The Proposal* movie?"

4. Limitation of the Study

The study particularly analyzes how Margaret Tate struggles in striving for superiority in *The Proposal* movie viewed from the Individual Psychological perspective.

5. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- a. To analyze the movie based on its structural elements
- b. To analyze the main character's (Margaret Tate) personality based on the individual psychological perspective.

6. Benefits of the Study

The benefits of this study are as follows:

a. Theoretical Benefit

The result of this research will give much supplementary knowledge and information to the world of literature, beside development particularly the literary study on Anne Fletcher's *The Proposal* movie.

b. Practical Benefit

This study is expected to give comprehensive understanding about *The Proposal* movie particularly from the aspect of individual psychological and to give further reference to other researchers who are interested in analyzing Anne Fletcher's *The Proposal* movie.

7. Research Method

a. Object of the study

The object of the study is the characters of *The Proposal* movie, particularly the leading character Margaret Tate.

b. Types of the Study

This study will apply qualitative research, which refers to research based on qualitative data taken from the movie. Crabtree and Miller (1999: 5) say that a qualitative is an interpretive research focusing on a natural, often human, field of activity, with the goal of generating holistic and realistic descriptions and/or explanations.

c. Type of the Data and the Data Source

This research will consist of two data sources:

1) Primary Data Source

The primary data source is the movie itself which is *The Proposal* by Anne Fletcher's.

2) Secondary Data Source

The data are taken from the related internet sites and reference book.

d. Technique of the Data Collection

In collecting data, the writer will apply the following step:

- 1) Finding the movie script,
- 2) Watching the movie repeatedly,
- 3) Determining the major character,

- 4) Taking note for the important part both in primary and secondary source, and
- 5) Classification the data into good unit and develop them.

e. Technique of the Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the writer uses descriptive technique. It is used to describe the elements of the play and to make some understanding toward the play.

B. Individual psychology

In analyzing the play, an individual psychological approach is used. Individual psychological theory was founded by Alfred Adler. He was born on February 7, 1870 in Rudolfsheim, a suburb of Vienna, he was the son of middle class Jewish merchant.

Individual psychology is “a science that attempts to understand the human personality as an organized entity” (Adler in Ryckman, 1985: 95). Individual as entire unit included physical and psychological, that is all action are guided by a person’s fundamental attitudes toward life, in which by mean of all psychological phenomena are unified within individual in a self –consistence manner (Adler in Ryckman; 1985: 95).

According to Adler (in Ryckman, 1985: 95), “people have a purpose in life namely to attain perfection or completion”. Formerly, inferiority feelings appear as the motivation for them to strive for superiority toward fulfillment of their own unique potential which is continued by struggling from minus to plus (Adler in Ryckman, 1985: 95).

Adler believes that, there are three stages for a man in thinking his final goal, that is, to be aggressive, to be powerful and to be superior (Adler in Ryckman, 1985: 95). Adler also states, “The final goal of struggle is to be aggressive and all powerful to dominate others. Humans are seen as selfish and concerned with self-aggrandizement. Later, Adler revised his thinking and claimed that the final goal is to be superior” (Adler in Ryckman, 1985: 95).

In viewing of a person as feeling, thinking, purposeful creature, operating in social environment, Adler assumes, a man is motivated primarily by social urges because he is inherently a social being which relates himself to the other people by joining in cooperative social activities” (Adler in hall and Lindsey, 1970: 120). In other words, a man cannot live without others. He fully realizes his position as free individual who lives in the social (Adler in Ansbacher, 1959: 126). So that is why, he is also called as a “conscious being” (Adler in Hall and Lindsey, 1970:121).

C. Psychological Analysis

1. Fiction Finalism

Fiction finalism deals with individual goals of life. Adler’s accept of fiction finalism is the idea that human behavior is directed toward a future goal of its own making. Adler (in Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992:153) theorizes that our ultimate goals are fictional goals that can be neither tested nor confirmed against reality.

In *The Proposal* Movie, Margaret Tate as the main character also shows fiction finalism in form of her dreams become true. In one of her monologue she said:

I'm a Canadian. Yes, Canadian.
With an expired visa who was about to be deported.
And because I didn't want to leave this wonderful country of
yours, - I forced Andrew here to marry me.

(Disc B, 30:44)

Here, from this confession Margaret describes she does not want to leave United State. She sends blackmails to Endrew to marry her. This relates to her ambition to defend her position as chief of book editor in U.S.

2. Inferiority Feeling and Compensation

Inferiority feeling means feeling weak or not able to accomplish the task faced (Passer and Smith, 2004:85). However feelings of inferiority in every human being are not same. So, the way of inferiority compensation is not also the same, depending on the goals of each individual (Adler in Sarwono, 2000: 161)

The first dimension of Adler's theory is inferiority feeling and compensation. The inferiority feeling and compensation can be understood as a sense of incompleteness and it needs to compensate as the way to achieve completeness. The compensation can be a superiority complex or over compensation which changes someone to become boastful, arrogant, egocentric, and a little self acceptance.

In *The Proposal* movie, Margaret has showed her inferiority feeling as well. The following is the excerpt of Tate's thought depicted in the movie.

I went to the bathroom and cried after Bob called me a poisonous
bitch.

(Disc B, 01:10)

In Tate's thought, she reveals that she is not as tough as she seems; after Bob yelled at her and called her names, she wept in the bathroom at work.

And the other inferiority feeling is when she feels wrong for Andrew's family.

Andrew	: - Margaret!
Margaret	: - I forgot, OK?
Andrew	: You forgot what?
Margaret	: I forgot what it was like to have a family! I've been on my own since I was and I forgot what it felt like to have people love you and make you breakfast and say, "Hey! We'd love to come down for the holidays." And I say, "Well, why don't we come up and see you instead?" And give you necklaces! And you have all that here, and you have Gertrude, and I'm just screwing it up!
Andrew	: You're not screwing it up! I agreed to this! - You were there, remember?
Margaret	: - Your family loves you.

(Disc B, 21:21)

Margaret feels very guilty about Andrew's family, after she is getting a gift from Andrew's family heritage that is hereditary. She seemed to lose control and blamed himself had forgotten it feels to have a family.

3. Striving for Superiority

Generally, striving for superiority is an effort to overcome feelings of inferiority by doing the thing that can develop the self existence in society: Furthermore, Adler (in Hall and Lindzey, 1970:123) stated that striving for superiority is a natural thing and a part of life which exists since a person is born. Here, from birth to death, the striving for superiority has an important role to bring the person from lower to the higher stage of development.

Furthermore, he develops a more general viewpoint in which people are seen to be striving for superiority, a condition quite different from the superiority complex. Thus, "there were three distinct stages in his theorizing on the ultimate

goal of human life: to be aggressive, to be powerful, and to be superior” (Hjelle, 1992:143; in Lindzey & Hall, 1970:123)

In this movie, Margaret Tate as the main character tries to apply the three stages of striving for superiority according to Adler (1970: 123). In the following conversation between Margaret and Bob Spoulding, Margaret implies the stage of to be aggressive.

Bob	: Our fearless leader and her liege. Please, do come in.
Margaret	: Beautiful breakfront. Is it new?
Bob	: It is English Regency Egyptian Revival, built in the 1800s but, yes, it is new to my office.
Margaret	: Witty. Bob, I'm letting you go.
Bob	: Pardon?
Margaret	: I asked you a dozen times to get Frank to do Oprah, and you didn't do it.
Bob	: You're fired. I have told you that is impossible. Frank hasn't done an interview in 20 years.
Margaret	: That is interesting, because I just got off the phone with him, and he is in.
Bob	: Excuse me?
Margaret	: You didn't even call him, did you?
Bob	: But...
Margaret	: I know, I know. Frank can be a little scary to deal with. For you. Now, I will give you two months to find another job. And then you can tell everyone you resigned, OK?

(Disc A, 05:24)

Margaret says to Bob that he is not competent in the workplace. She is very assertive and ambitious in leading companies. She easily dismissed Bob that might endanger his position bias.

The second conservation between Margaret Tate and Endrew shows the way she steps into the second step for striving for superiority, which is to be powerful.

Margaret : Oh, here's one. Whose place do we stay at, yours or mine?
That's easy. Mine.
Endrew : - And why wouldn't we stay at mine?
Margaret : - Because I live at Central Park West.
And you probably live at some squalid little studio apartment with stacks of yellowed Penguin Classics.

(Disc A, 21:56)

Margaret threatens her assistant to meet her demand. If she gets deported it will be more afflicted fate for Endrew. Endrew willing to meet the growing demand for Margaret to married her, because she also wanted to be promoted to be an editor.

In the next conservation between Endrew and Margaret also show the stage. After Margaret fells all had failed and he has got back to Canada.

Endrew : - Margaret.
Margaret : - I need the boxes to go out today.
- I want to make sure everything is...
Endrew : - Margaret! Stop talking!
Gotta say something.
Margaret : - OK.
Endrew : - This will just take a sec.
Margaret : Fine. What?
Endrew : Three days ago, I loathed you. I used to dream about you getting hit by a cab. Or poisoned.
Margaret : - Oh, that's nice.
Endrew : - I told you to stop talking.
Then we had our little adventure up in Alaska and things started to change. Things changed when we kissed.
And when you told me about your tattoo.
Even when you checked me out when we were naked.
Margaret : - Well, I didn't see anything...
Endrew : - Yeah, you did.
But I didn't realise any of this until I was standing alone.
In a barn... wife-less.

Now, you can imagine my disappointment when it suddenly dawned on me that the woman I love is about to be kicked out of the country.
So, Margaret.
Marry me.
Because I'd like to date you.

(Disc B, 40:59)

Margaret cancels her marriages contract with Endrew, Endrew promises to meet him again in the company and declare his love Margaret who also loves to receive Endrew love without a contract again. Now she is getting love and can maintain her position in the company.

All things that Margaret Tate did show that she strives for superiority, According to Feist (1985: 71) every person is born with the tendency toward completion and perfection. This tendency has a unique character by doing creative power. "The creative power gives direction for striving force by incorporating it into the final goal". Thus, Adler suggests that it will be actualized or be gun during the fifth year when person develops a life goal that serves as a focus for our superiority striving, although, the life goal provides a guideline for motivation and direction. (Adler in Lindzey & Hall, 1970: 123)

4. Style of Life

Style of life refers to the unique pattern of traits, behavior and habits, which show the particular way that a person does to reach his life goal (Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992:81). Style of life includes not only the person's goal, but also self concept feeling toward other, and attitude toward the world (Feist, 1985:74).

There are four types of styles of life, namely ruling type, getting type, avoiding type, and socially useful type. Adler distinguishes four primary types of

style. Adler said the three of them to be mistaken style. These include the ruling type: aggressive dominating people who do not have much social interest or cultural perception, the getting type dependent people who take rather than give, and the avoiding type, people who try to escape life's problems and take part in not much socially constructive activity. The fourth life style by Adler is the socially useful type people with a great deal of social interest and activity.

In *The Proposal* movie Margaret has personal characteristics that reveal on her style of life. Margaret is iron woman. She dismisses Bob from her job. After he failed to make Frank appear on the opera. (RC, 05:45 (disc 2))

Margaret : Witty. Bob, I'm letting you go.
Bob : Pardon?
Margaret : I asked you a dozen times to get Frank to do Oprah, and you didn't do it.
(Disc A, 05:45)

Margaret is smart woman. She gets idea to marry with Endrew to defend her position. She really loves her job. She gives everything for permanent in U.S.

In one of her monologue she said:

Come here.
Gentlemen, I understand. I understand
the predicament that we are in.
And...
And there's... Well...
I think there's something
that you should know.
We're getting married.

(Disc A, 10:36)

Margaret is a kind woman. She saves Kevin (Endrew's family dog) life from eagle who wants to kill him.

Margaret Tate in her style of life is identified to the ruling type. She has a little social interest, but a high degree of activity. She applies it in a different way. She was very lonely in her life. She seems forgetting her own life.

5. Social Interest

According to Pervin and John social interest is a relationship and cooperation between an individual and the others. Hjelle and Ziegler (1992:147) assert that the social interest is a concept that deals with the relationship between an individual and his social environment and culture.

Social interest is an understanding that humans are social creative by nature and not by habit. Social interest can be defined as an attitude of relatedness with humanity in general as well as emphatic for each member of human.

Margaret	: I need you this weekend to help
Endrew	: review his files and his manuscript.
	- This weekend?
Margaret	: - You have a problem with that?
Endrew	: No. I... just my grandmother's 90th birthday, so I was
	goanna go home and...
	It's fine. I'll cancel it.
	You're saving me from a weekend of misery, so
	it's... Good talk, yeah.

(Disc B, 07:40)

She asks for Assistant to work in holiday when the days though at the time Endrew want to come to her grandmother's 90th birthday. Margaret's crews often epithet like a witch, venomous bitch, etc, to symbolize atrocity in leading companies.

In Andrew's welcoming party, he and Margaret want to make people think they are in love. It state in the following conversation.

Margaret	: People need to think
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we're in love. So let's...
Andrew : That's no problem. I can do that.
I can pretend to be the doting fiancé.
That's easy.

(Disc A, 28:36)

Margaret tries to pay attention to Andrew's family and other people in Sitka. She asks to Gertrude about the love story of Andrew and Gertrude, and she gives respond for Andrew's love. She also has taken orders from Andrew family.

Gertrude : It's a little different than New York, huh?
Margaret : Little bit. Little bit.
You ever been?
Gertrude : No. That was always Andrew's dream, not mine.
Margaret : You guys were pretty serious, huh?
Gertrude : Well, I mean, we dated in high school and all through college, but we were kids.
Margaret : And you guys called it off because of...
Gertrude : Well...
The night before we graduated school...
...he proposed and said he wanted to elope and run away to New York with me.
And...
Margaret : - You said "no".
Gertrude : And I said "no", yeah.

(Disc A, 47:13)

Margaret and Andrew come to immigration service and to meet Mr. Gilbertson. They try to convince Mr. Gilbertson that their marriage is based on true love not the fake one.

6. Creative Power

The style of life is developed by the individual creative power. Each person is empowering with the freedom to create his own life style. The life style is the creative act of the individual. It is her or his unique interpretation of environment. This people are in control of their fact not victims of it.

This creative power is responsible for the person's life goal. It determines the method of driving for the goal and contributes to the development of social interest.

In *The Proposal* movie, Margaret Tate realizes the crazy idea to defend her job. She sends blackmail to Andrew for marrying her, because it is important to Andrew's career in the office.

Andrew	: - Margaret.
Margaret	: - Yes?
Andrew	: - I'm not gonna marry you.
Margaret	: - Sure you are. Because if you don't, your dreams of touching the lives of millions with the written word are dead. Bob is gonna fire you the second I'm gone. Guaranteed. That means you're out on the street looking for a job. That means the time that we spent together, the lattes, the cancelled dates, the midnight Tamp ax runs, were all for nothing and all your dreams of being an editor are gone.

(Disc A, 13:26)

D. Conclusion

Based on the analysis on *The Proposal* movie by using individual psychological approach, it can be concluded that the striving for superiority is one of weary and exhausting job to do. It needs hard works to realize it. They are able to change everything including the character and the personality.

Margaret Tate strives for superiority because she does not have any person to lead her life, after her parents died in an accident. She becomes a chief editor at a major New York City book publisher. She is an ambitious human of Canada

immigrant who has desire to defend his position. She sends blackmails to Andrew to keep the ruse until she gains her citizenship.

Indeed, in this world, a person sometimes feels dissatisfied in her life. She wants more than what she has. Thus, a person usually creates a fictional final goal that makes her life better than before. However, the imperfect condition in oneself usually keeps her to reach her goals and makes her feel inferior. For this reason, a person always struggles and uses many ways to be the most superior one. Margaret Tate's relationship with social environment also indicates her efforts in making her dream came true. As a creative human being, a person also always shows her efforts to get the better future in her life. These conditions make her become an ambitious person. However, in struggling for reach the desire, she sometimes ignores the norms, convection, regulations, and social values.

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